



## New India Assurance Unveils the Aruban Personage Calendar 2005 during an Elegant Reception in the Marriott Grand Ballroom

Every year the Raghunath family of New India Assurance hosts a Gala Christmas Party for all the local news media plus family and friends, and the subjects of their annual calendar with families. Since 1999, the New India calendar has paid homage to Arubans of outstanding achievement that have made great contributions to the community and brought pride and honor to Aruba with their New India Aruban Personage Calendar. This much-anticipated event hosted by Managing Directors Joy Raghunath and her brother Ivan was a spirited, joyous occasion, with everyone dressed in their holiday best. On Friday evening, nearly two hundred celebrants, including press from TV, radio, newspapers and magazines enjoyed the show featuring traditional Aruban performers such as Senora Bernadina Growell and Jossy Brokke, former calendar personalities as well.

The high point of the evening was the unveiling of the New India calendar and the presentations of the original oil portraits by internationally renowned artist Charitto Chavez. Ms. Chavez has done the portraits since the inception of the calendar, which progressed from a simple two colors to the beautiful full color work of art it is today.

The subjects of this year's calendar are:

January: **Dr. Otto Wolter**, Ophthalmologist, founder and Director of the Aruba Eye Institute and a member of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery. He has helmed presentations and workshops in Holland, Mexico, the United States, and all over the Caribbean.

February: **Father Sidney Michael Jacob** of the Holy Cross Anglican Church in San Nicholas is very involved in community affairs and assistance foundations, particularly for Aruba's youth. He is also the founder of the Excelsior Steelpan Academy, and has revived interest in this traditional part of Caribbean music and culture amongst the young people of Aruba.

March: **Philomena Wong** could be considered Aruba's Poet Laureate, many of her works in Papiamentu have been published. She has recited her poetry at international seminars and for Crown Prince Willem Alexander and Princess Maxima during their visit to Aruba.

April: **Oslin "Chin" Boekhoudt** is Co-founder of Mascaruba, the repertory theatre company of Aruba, devoted to theatre in Papiamentu. Actor, Director and playwright, he has worked with Mascaruba for thirty years. He has been named Honorary Friendly Ambassador by the Prefecture of Japan and was initiated into the Order of Orange Nassau in 1980, (the equivalent of being Knighted.)

May: **Nicole Hoevertsz** is an executive in the Department of Foreign Affairs but is best known for her involvement with sports and the Olympics. An advocate of athletic participation all her life, she represented Aruba as part of the Synchronized Swimming team at the 1984 games in Los Angeles and has coached the team for many years after. In 2002 she received the "Paragon Award" of the International Swimming Hall of Fame for her extraordinary devotion to the sport.

June: It is the rare island visitor that does not know the name of **Ike Cohen**, owner of the Manchebo Beach Resort and a pioneer of the Aruban Tourist Industry. His annual birthday party has become a fundraiser and in 1996 founded the "Ike Cohen Charity Fund." The last Sunday of each month he hosts a morning devoted to the performers of classic and native cultural music. In 1983 Queen Beatrix named him a Knight of the Order of Orange Nassau.

July: **Alidia Wever**, is a native Aruban dancer that has performed with international dance troupes such as Alvin Ailey in New York, Nathan Trice/Rituals and the Notario Dance Company. She has performed in dance festivals in Europe, the U.S., Latin American and all over the Caribbean. She joins her mother in passing on her love of dance to Aruba's youth at the Arubaanse Dans and Ballet School. Dance Academy.

August: **Eugene Kigsale** has brought Aruba the attention of the sport media as a premier player in the Major Leagues while playing for the Baltimore Orioles, San Diego Padres and Detroit Tigers. Together with fellow Aruban baseball players Sidney Ponson and Calvin Maduro he founded the "Celebrities Foundation" that sponsors an annual softball game and concert for local charities, where several major league stars of the U.S. donated their time.

September: **Amado Rosina**, Musical Performer and Sport star Amado has brought represented Aruba in sporting events and music competitions and festivals throughout the Caribbean and

Latin America. He is the musical director of Casa del Mar and one of Aruba's favorite TV Soccer commentators.

October: **Elvis Lopez** studied audiovisual arts at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, graduating Cum Laude and has represented Aruba at several Biennales and over 50 art expositions in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Ecuador and Peru to name a few.

November: **Ramon Todd Dandare** graduated Cum Laude in Spanish from the University of Amsterdam and taught in Aruba, and has participated in numerous international conferences. He was named Director of the Institute of the Antillean Language, and has been fundamental in developing and establishing Papiamentu as a recognized language.

December is devoted to the Imeldahof Center for Children from Troubled Homes. Each year the Raghunath family chooses a worthy cause to spotlight in the calendar and a Chefryldine Muller, news anchor for ATV was there to receive a generous donation from New India for the Imeldahof Foundation.

The subjects were photographed and rendered in oils by artist Charitto Chavez. Her portraits have a vibrancy and are infused with a spirit and reflection of the various personalities.

Joy Ragunath states that the management of New India did not realize what a holiday tradition the calendar would become, but they felt it was important to recognize the outstanding individuals that contribute to Aruba's culture and esteem, "Especially during their lifetime, when they can enjoy it." They print 8000 calendars per year and they are not for sale, but are given away.

Every subject felt honored upon being chosen, Alydia Wever confesses she was left "speechless, " but Pastor Sidney Jacob expresses it best in the sentiment that " I was actually a little uncomfortable (at the moment of being told he was chosen.) One contributes to the community because it is in their heart, not because you are seeking accolades."